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ABSTRACT

A description is given of an assessment model for undergraduate preservice teacher education students. Sequentially, it begins at the point of the student's entry into the teacher education program and continues through the student's entry into the profession. The model is constructed for the four-year baccalaureate teacher preparation program which culminates in a recommendation for state certification. The model is developmental in that progressions to each successive level signifies mastery of previous requirements. The strengths and weaknesses of the teacher education candidates are evaluated and alternatives for basic skill enhancement are made where necessary. The model provides corrective feedback and counseling both toward and away from a teaching career. It also facilitates the preparation of students from underrepresented teacher education candidates by monitoring their progress in basic skills and supporting their admission to teacher education through the process of alternative admission. Based on mastery of specific knowledge and skills that are teachable, the model precludes the screening out of students based on cultural, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic biases and/or handicapping conditions. (JD)

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ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER EDUCATION SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

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ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE

TEACHER EDUCATION

SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

The Assessment Model

The model for assessment of basic students is graphically depicted in Figure 6.1.1. Sequentially, it begins at the point of student's entry into the Saginaw Valley State University teacher education program and continues through the student's entry into the profession. The points in time for implementation are noted at the bottom of the figure. The model is constructed for the four-year baccalaureate teacher preparation program which culminates in a recommendation for state certification.

The impetus for this model is a combination of a desire to raise standards of teacher quality and to evaluate teacher knowledge. This model is based on a major review of the professional literature and a strengthening in the teacher preparation curriculum at SVSU. This model, as well as categories for assessment (e.g. professional role, pedagogy, and subject matter), is also based on a review of national reform reports and current research in teacher education. In addition, the model is established in consultation with various faculty in the university,

especially those in Arts and Behavioral Science and Science, Engineering and Technology; practioners in the field; college advisory committees; former students; and the college of education faculty. A body of research provides the knowledge bases for the assumptions inherent in the foundation of the Saginaw Valley State University model for the assessment of undergraduate teacher education. The model has six principles which undergird the assessment process.

First, the model is developmental in that progression to each successive level signifies mastery of previous requirements. The SVSU model evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of teacher education candidates and makes alternatives for basic skill enhancement where necessary. In addition, the model provides corrective feedback and counseling both toward and away from a teaching career. The SVSU model facilitates the preparation of students from underrepresented teacher education candidates by monitoring their progress in basic skills and supporting their admission to teacher education through the process of alternative admission. Based on mastery of specific knowledge and skills which are teachable, the model precludes the screening out of students based on cultural, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic biases and/or handicapping conditions.

Second, the SVSU model is based on students being admitted to and progressing through teacher education programs in one of two

program strands--elementary or secondary education. As such, many students are not initially enrolled in the College of Education, but enroll in other degree-granting colleges (i.e. Arts and Behavioral Sciences or Science Engineering, and Technology). A list of approved majors and minors is presented in Table 6.1.1.

TABLE 6.1.1.
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
APPROVED MAJORS AND MINORS

BA	English
BR	Reading
CA	Economics
CC	History
CD	Political Science
CE	Psychology
CF	Sociology
CX	Social Science
DA	Biology
DC	Chemistry
DE	Physics
DX	Science
EX	Mathematics
FA	French
FB	German
FF	Spanish
JX	Music
LX	Art
MB	Physical Education
NR	Computer Science
PX	Humanities
YF	Bilingual Spanish

Third, the model acknowledges that many SVSU students do not follow a traditional, sequential four-year program. The years indicated in the model are not intended to reflect "real" time, but to indicate relative points in time. The sequence of progression is developmental and applies to all students in teacher certification programs. As such, some students may require five or six years to complete the program. Likewise, post-baccalaureate students are not exempt from the developmental sequence indicated in the model. They are required to master all components and meet all criteria of the program. Some modifications in sequence and in prerequisites are warranted for post-baccalaureate students. Such students may show evidence of established proficiency in reading, writing, and language arts through alternative documentation (e.g. the GRE) and may be exempt from the writing component of the Pre Professional Skills Test (PPST). The SVSU model assures that the student has attained the minimum level of proficiency established by the College of Education.

Fourth, a significant component of faculty support in the SVSU model is not graphically depicted, but is part of the support system inherent to it. At SVSU, there is an expectation that the faculty are alert to the problems that some students have in methodology classes or field experiences. Such problems may affect the student's progress through the program. Problems are appropriately brought to the attention of the department chair or

the program coordinator and for assistance or remediation.

Fifth, there exists within this model a defined sequence of the teacher education program which may appear as a limitation. This structure precludes persons outside of the College of Education from inappropriate advisement. The philosophy underlying the SVSU model emphasizes establishing the student's program needs in sequence as a high priority. In that sense, structure in the developmental pattern of teacher preparation increases the quality of the program. A rationale for the scope and sequence of the teacher education program is based on a defensible theoretical framework--the knowledge bases. This seeming limitation, then, becomes a significant programmatic advantage in the SVSU model.

Sixth, the SVSU model assumes that the program it serves is both individualized and competency based. There is a disinclination, then, to assess student quality solely on the number of program components completed and to apply a remedy of merely adding courses for program improvement.

FIGURE 6.1.1.
ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Diagnose needs and provide skill re-enforcement

Diagnose needs and provide skill re-enforcement

Additional counseling and advising

Preprofessional	Teacher Ed. Program Adm.	Annual Review	Student Teaching	Certi-fication
1. completion of 39 hrs of general ed.	completion of 61 credit hours	clinical/ field evaluations	reading for stdnt tchng by:a. prof. ed., b. fld super., c. contnt area spclst, d. sdt tch com	degree check
2. pretest on basic skills, reading, assmt writing, and mathematics	identify major/minor	academic achievement review	GPA-2.75	Student Teaching
3. enrollment	asmt of cog/ affec atbts: PPST, App., and intervw	professional education component review	course check	port-folio review
4.	complete requis. courses	recommenda-tions of faculty in content area		required review
5.	attainment of a 2.75 GPA			GPA
6.	recommenda-tion from content area faculty			
1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	

The Assessment Model: Operationalized

One can best integrate the conceptualization of the model in the context of the above assumptions by progressing through the model in stages. At year one, an assessment of basic skills is conducted with freshman students or transfer students, and skills in writing, reading, and mathematics are assessed by the Office of Academic Support Services. In addition, most SVSU teacher education students enroll in a class entitled EDUC 100, "Exploring Teaching", a course that can be taken as a freshman and a course that is the first in the profession education sequence. Demographic information is also collected and filed in one year by the Office of Clinical Experiences. Pre-education students who do poorly on the basic skills tests or who appear to the academic advisor to be in need of further assessment in either these skills or career counseling receive personal assistance. If there is a deficiency in basic skills, students are referred for skills enhancement available through various university programs or other assistance centers within SVSU.

After the completion of 61 credits with a grade of "C" or better, the completion of Psychology 100, General Psychology, and Education 100, Exploring Teaching; evidence of a 2.75 accumulated grade point average (GPA); and the successful completion of the PPST, the student may apply for entrance into the elementary or secondary education program.

Candidates for admission are evaluated by the Teacher Education Admissions Committee on the successful completion of the following:

- -Fulfill the SVSU basic skills requirements at SVSU.
- -Attain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or or higher.
- -Successfully complete EDUC 100 and PSYC 100.
- -Complete special requirements, if any, as designated by the departments in which student is working on major or minor.
- -Complete the Pre Professional Skills Test (PPST).
- -Complete an oral interview.

The PPST (Educational Testing Service, 1986) is used to measure competence in the essential skills of mathematics, reading, and language arts. The Teacher Education Admissions Committee reviews the academic performance as measured by the PPST and uses the 25th percentile as a baseline for minimum academic performance. The candidate is notified, in writing, of the committee's decision. The student completes the application form and is interviewed by a team of trained interviewers who assess oral communication, and commitment to the profession. The committee reviews the entire

academic history of a candidate, performance on the PPST, and commitment to the profession before it renders a final decision regarding admission to the program. If the student does not perform satisfactorily on one or more of these admission assessments, he or she is counseled as to help available for improving performance and is apprised of the opportunity to reapply at a future date.

From the point of admission, the College of Education students meet regularly with faculty members in methodology courses for monitoring purposes. An essential priority is for the student to establish his or her professional portfolio. The portfolio is a repository for examples of the student's work, evaluations of clinical and field experiences, grades plus additional supportive information. Careful monitoring of the student's acquisition of necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values is continuous and documented. In addition, career counseling is given during the meetings with faculty advisors. During the counseling sessions, students present examples of academic work, lesson plans, and other examples of teaching performance which are maintained in the student's portfolio. This portfolio serves as a monitoring device and, in a sense, is a progressive self-evaluation tool for students. Over time, they can see evidence of academic and professional growth. The goal is to see that the portfolio eventually serves as a set of credentials. At the end of the training program, extraneous pieces are sorted out. Later, during the student teaching experience, a resume is developed, and the

portfolio becomes a career seeking tool.

Depending on the assessment outcomes each semester, the student continues in the professional preparation program or is advised to consider another, more appropriate personal and professional goal. Once again, there is built into the system the opportunity for the student to enhance skills and improve in those areas where performance does not meet established criteria.

At approximately the beginning of the fourth year, the student provides examples of course and field work in the portfolio. The student, by this point in time, has accumulated written recommendations from professional educators in the field attesting to his or her competency. These references come from professional educators, field supervisors, and faculty members.

If unsuccessful in field experiences or college coursework, the student may be referred for additional help as well as career counseling. If the student has successfully completed all requirements (including the maintenance of a 2.75 GPA) all records are sent to the Office of Student Teaching and reviewed by the Student Teaching Committee which is composed of professional education faculty and field supervisors. The office of Student Teaching reviews the student's portfolio and to assess the student's readiness for student teaching. If readiness is not apparent, further advising or counseling of a student regarding

alternative career choices may be warranted. If additional help in developing proficiency is needed, it will be provided. If approval for the student is indicated, the student is approved for student teaching.

Following student teaching, the Student Teaching Committee reviews the student teacher's performance and evaluates the student teacher's records, including professional portfolio, to determine the student's eligibility for graduation. Students who are deemed

adequately prepared are approved for graduation and are thereby eligible for certification.